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REMARKS

This is in response to the Advisory Action mailed November 29, 2006. The Examiner stated that the Applicant's Response filed September 6, 2006 did not place the application in condition for allowance because the Examiner considers that all of the teachings of the Application are disclosed or would have been rendered obvious in view of the prior art. The Advisory Action did not indicate whether the proposed amendment to Claim 28 in the Response filed September 6, 2006 was entered. Therefore, Claim 28 is identically amended herein. A Request for Continued Examination (RCE) is included herewith, which allows for entry of the amendments herein as a matter of right. A petition and fee for extension of time (37 C.F.R. 1.136[a]) is also included herewith.

Prior Claim Rejection – 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

Claims 1-6, 11-14, 18-29, 34, and 35 were previously rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being anticipated by United States Patent 5,124,554 issued to Fowler ("Fowler") in view of United States Patent 4,244,672 issued to Lund ("Lund") in view of United States Patent 5,868,238 issued to Bonnet ("Bonnet") in view of United States Patent 5,171,120 issued to Bernard ("Bernard"). Fowler is the United States Patent corresponding to the Fowler U.K. Patent Application 2,242,520 applied in the Office Action dated October 11, 2005. Because there is no motivation to combine these disparate references and the prior art fails to disclose, teach, or suggest every element arranged in the same manner as in the rejected claims, the rejection is traversed. Notwithstanding, Applicant has amended Claims 1, 11, 14, 22, and 34, and has added Claim 36, to more clearly define Applicant's invention. Specifically, Claim 1 has been amended to call for:

1. A baggage screening system, comprising:
a plurality of screening subsystems, each comprising an automated bag screen device and a feed conveyor for feeding bags to said screen device;
a supply conveyor ~~for adapted to selectively supplying bags~~ adapted to selectively supplying bags to said screening subsystems, ~~said supply conveyor supplying bags only to a screening subsystem that has no more than a particular number of unscreened bags that are at that screening subsystem;~~

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a cleared bag conveyor and an uncleared bag conveyor,
said uncleared bag conveyor adapted to deliver bags to a manual
 screening function; and

a sortation conveyor network downstream of said screening
 subsystem to selectively divert bags to said cleared bag conveyor
 or said uncleared bag conveyor;

wherein said sortation conveyor network comprises a
 buffer downstream of each said bag screen device and a pair of
 diverters associated with each said buffer, said buffer ~~buffering~~
adapted to buffer bags for a secondary bag screening function, one
 of said diverters upstream of the associated said buffer being
 adapted to divert a bag to either said cleared bag conveyor or said
 buffer, another of said diverters downstream of the associated said
 buffer being adapted to divert a bag to either said cleared bag
 conveyor or said uncleared bag conveyor, wherein bags cleared by
 either said bag screen device or said secondary bag screening
~~function can be diverted are delivered~~ to said cleared bag
 conveyor, and wherein bags not cleared by said secondary bag
 screening function are delivered to said uncleared bag conveyor for
 delivery to said manual screening function.

Amended Claim 1 is patentably distinguishable over the cited reference including, by
 way of example, that the disposition of bags that are not cleared by the secondary bag screening
 function are sent to a manual screening area. Applicant respectfully submits that neither Fowler
 alone, nor the combination of Fowler, Lund, Bonnet, and Bernard, discloses, teaches, or suggests
 the invention as defined in independent claims 1, 14, and 22.

Fowler discloses that baggage which fails inspection by a "non-invasive inspection
 system" is delivered to a "designated location" where the bags can be "examined more closely"
 (Col. 3, lines 34-47), which is later referred to as a "second level of inspection" (Col. 8, lines 10-
 16). Though Applicant respectfully submits that, even if the "non-invasive inspection system" of
 Fowler is equated with Applicant's screening subsystem, and the "second level of inspection" of
 Fowler is equated with Applicant's secondary bag screening function, Fowler does not teach or
 suggest a manual screening function.

Likewise, though Applicant submits that, even if the "non-invasive inspection system" of
 Fowler is equated with Applicant's screening subsystem, and the "second level of inspection" of
 Fowler is equated with Applicant's manual screening function, Fowler does not teach or suggest

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a secondary bag screening function. Thus, Fowler does not teach or suggest the equivalent of a manual screening function in combination with a screening subsystem and a secondary bag screening function. Further, neither Lund, nor Bonnet, nor Bernard supplies the elements missing from Fowler as described above. Accordingly, the rejection of Claims 1, 14, and 22 has been overcome.

Claims 11 and 34 have been rewritten in independent form to recite a baggage screening system having an automated bag screening device and a secondary bag screening function including a display that is adapted to display images of bags captured by the screen device. It is submitted that the Examiner has failed to make, in the Office Action mailed July 6, 2006, any reference to the prior art to support the Examiner's position that it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to modify Fowler "so that the secondary bag screening function used images of bags captured by screen device . . . so that the bags could be examined more closely so that hazardous materials or weapons could be found . . . [and] the secondary screening function could use x-rays as images taken from the initial screening." No prior art is cited in the Office Action for this proposition, and the embodiments disclosed in the present application cannot be considered as prior art to itself. Therefore, the Examiner has failed to meet every claim limitation and a prima facie case of obviousness is absent. See MPEP 2143.01. Therefore, the rejection of Claims 11 and 34 has been overcome.

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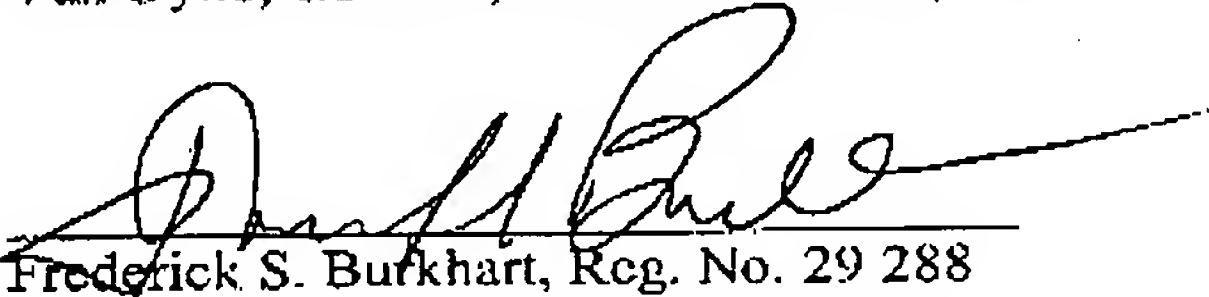
The amendments presented herein are fully supported by the application as filed. Accordingly, no new matter is added. It is submitted that the present application is in a condition for allowance. A notice to that effect is earnestly solicited. If Examiner Matthews has any questions or reservations, it is requested that Examiner Matthews call the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,

HARRY T. EDWARDS

Van Dyke, Gardner, Linn & Burkhardt, LLP

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